

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2012 IMUA Scholarship Program Applications Available

The City of Bushnell, in partnership with the Illinois Municipal Utilities Association (IMUA), is again offering a scholarship competition program for eligible high school seniors. Each eligible applicant is asked to submit an application and an essay of 500 words or less addressing their choice of one of three utility-related questions (*see attached questions sheet*).

Applicants must be **high school seniors** whose parents or legal guardians are residential customers of the City of Bushnell Municipal Utility.

According to Mike McCleery, Utility Manager for the City of Bushnell, the program has a dual purpose:

- 1) To promote and recognize scholastic achievement; and,
- 2) 2) To create greater awareness among young adults of the many issues facing consumers and public power municipalities today.

“Today’s energy providers, including municipally-owned and operated utilities, face a myriad of economic, environmental and other challenges which warrant creative and innovative solutions. “Creating a great awareness of these issues among tomorrow’s leaders can be the first step in helping to determine effective, long-term solutions, both now and into the future.

This will be the 12th year IMUA has offered the program.

“Since its inception in 2000, IMUA’s scholarship program has proven to be a very popular and successful program for IMUA, its members and the communities it serves,” said Kevin M. Gaden, President & CEO of the IMUA. “Public power communities offer their customers a number of cost, service and other advantages compared to those served by other energy providers. IMUA’s scholarship program is another example of how municipally-owned and operated utility systems can help return value to their communities while at the same time, provide a measure of financial assistance to those students who wish to pursue a college education.”

The deadline for submitting applications and essays is **Friday, March 9, 2012**. A committee of municipal utility officials will select a total of **four (4) finalists**, each of whom will receive a certificate and \$500 scholarship award, and if an applicant from Bushnell is selected that applicant will receive an additional \$500. **Winners will be announced sometime in April.**

Organized in 1948, IMUA is a statewide trade association, which represents the unified interests of, and provides services to, 64 municipalities, which operate their own electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water and wastewater treatment systems. Applicants may contact IMUA for more information at **(217) 789-4632**.

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2012 IMUA Scholarship Program Questions

1) Q. Electric - *Electric-powered vehicles are gaining popularity among consumers as an alternative to gasoline-fueled vehicles. Despite that growing popularity, gasoline-fueled vehicles still hold a number of advantages over electric-powered cars. Given that, what can be done to encourage greater use of electric-powered vehicles among consumers? What impact do you see their use having on our state, local and national economies? What particular challenges do you think they pose for the electric distribution systems of local municipalities, and why?

***Note: Includes Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEVs), Extended Range Electric Vehicles (EREVs), and Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs);**

2) Q. Natural Gas - Shale gas holds great promise as an alternate form of energy to help supplement America's overall energy needs, both now and in the future. However, a number of environmental concerns pose a challenge to the further development of shale gas reserves, including a process known as hydraulic fracturing. In light of that, what can be done to help alleviate these concerns so that the development of shale gas can continue? What impact do you see shale gas having on America's overall energy picture, and why?

3) Q. Water – Water remains a precious and often scarce resource throughout certain regions of our country and even around the globe, with a very real danger of running low on supply in some areas in the not-too-distant future. Given that, what can be done to help ensure that adequate supplies of water will continue to be available to those who need it? What technologies, methods and practices do you see as being instrumental in helping accomplish that goal? Should water be regulated as a commodity in those areas where its scarcity is prevalent, and why or why not?